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THE LETTER

Sent by the States-General of the

United Provinces

Of the *Low Countreys*

TO

HIS MAJESTY,

By their Trumpeter:

Together with His

Majesties Answer

To the said *Letter.*

Translated out of *French* into *English.*

Published by His Majesties special Command.

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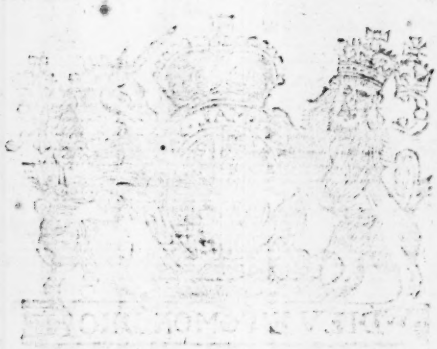


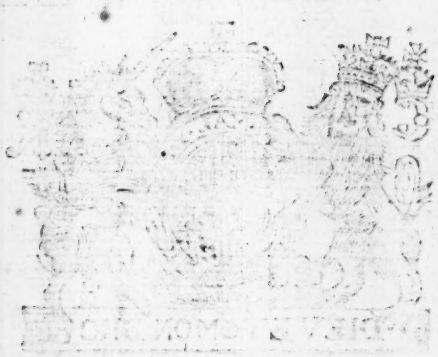
A LETTER

Sent by the

STATES-GENERAL OF THE UNITED PROVINCES TO THE KING of GREAT BRITAIN.

SIRE,

AS we have never desired any thing more then to merit the good Will of Your Majesty, and to cultivate a Friendship which had been heretofore Hereditary between Your Majesties Kingdom and this Republick; so, we were beyond measure troubled when we saw Your Majesty exasperated against us, and that by the Artifices of evil-minded persons Your Subjects and Ours have been overwhelmed with those miseries which are inseparable from War,



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AS we have never desired any thing more then to merit the good Will of Your Majesty, and to cultivate a Friendship which had been heretofore Hereditary between Your Majesties Kingdom and this Republick; so, we were beyond measure troubled when we saw Your Majesty exasperated against us, and that by the Artifices of evil-minded persons Your Subjects and Ours have been overwhelmed with those miseries which are inseparable from War,

and brought to ſhed that bloud which hath been alwayes dear to either ſide. The ſad experience we had thereof on both parts in the preceding War, had given us cauſe to believe at the ſame time, that after we were re-united, the Peace would be a bleſſing which was no more to be raviſhed from us. And we were the rather perſwaded of it, becauſe the New Alliances we were entred into, ſeemed able to make our Union eternal: But ſeeing Divine Providence, for the chaſtiſement of the two Nations, hath permitted that things ſhould not continue long in that happy eſtate, we no ſooner perceived a Miſunderſtanding ariſe, but we thought our ſelves obliged to uſe all imaginable endeavours to ſtop the progreſs of it, and to omit nothing that might contribute to the preventing ſo great an evil as that of a Rupture. In order to which, being certainly informed that Your Majeſty was offended at a Medall, which we had not ſuffered to be ſold, but that we thought it very innocent, we immediately ſuppreſſed it, and cauſed the very Stamps to be broken for fear there might be ſome made ſecretly; And to give Your Majeſty more eſſential proofs of the eſteem we had of Your Friendſhip, we yielded to Your Majeſty whatever You were pleaſed to demand of us in behalf of the inhabitants of Surinam, *how prejudicial ſoever the thing were to us, and whatſoever reaſon we otherwiſe had not to conſent to it. At the ſame time we ſent the Sieur* Van Beuningen *to Your Majeſty for removing, if it were poſſible, the ſiniſter impreſſions which ſome laboured to*

poſſeſs

poſſeß Your Majeſty with, and for perfecting a Regulation propoſed by Your Majeſties Ambaſſador between Your East-India *Company and Ours. Since that, although the little ſucceß which the ſaid Sieur* Van Beuningens *Negotiation had had, gave us but too great cauſe to fear that we ſhould not ſucceed better for the future; yet we no ſooner underſtood that there were ſome who would perſwade Your Majeſty as well againſt all likelihood of truth, as truth it ſelf, That we treated underhand with* France *to the prejudice of Your Majeſties intereſts, but we gave order without delay to our Ambaſſador with Your Majeſty, to declare to Your Majeſty in our name, That to ſhew the falſhood of thoſe reports which were ſpread abroad to our diſadvantage, and to give Your Majeſty eſſential and unqueſtionable marks of the ſincerity of our intentions, we were ready to enter into ſuch an Alliance with You as You ſhould think fit, how ſtrict ſoever it ſhould be, and to go far beyond any thing we had hitherto done, for ſecuring the Peace of* Europe. *Then followed the affair of the Flagg, wherein we think our conduct hath been with all imaginable reſpect towards Your Majeſties Perſon: And although the Anſwer we gave to Your Ambaſſadors Memorial be ſuch as we ſhall always be ready to ſubmit to the judgment of all* Europe, *Yet upon complaint that it was obſcure and inſufficient, we ſent an Ambaſſador Extraordinary to Your Majeſty, and gave power to him, as alſo to our Ordinary Ambaſſador, to clear what ſhould be thought obſcure, and to adde what ſhould*

be neceſſary: But inſtead of entring into regular Conferences with them, and letting them know what was defective in our Anſwer, they were neglected, and no Conference granted them upon the point which might have ended all our differences, till an hour after Your Majeſties Declaration of War had been read and approved in Your Council.

All this, SIRE, *doth ſufficiently evidence, with what application and zeal we have laboured to ſatisfie your Majeſty, and to extinguiſh in its birth a Fire which is ready to conſume all Chriſtendom. And as we have not entred into this War but from an indiſpenſable neceſsity of defending and protecting our Subjects, we have ever ſince the Rupture, as much as we were able, ſought Your Majeſties Friendſhip, and never given over the making overtures of Peace. Upon which account we ſent our Deputies Extraordinary to Your Majeſty in the moneth of* June *of the year laſt paſt, who were confined to* Hampton Court, *without having any Audience given them, or being heard what they had to ſay on our part. A Miniſter from the Elector of* Brandenburgh *paſſed alſo into* England *upon the ſame ſubject, and charged himſelf, at our requeſt, with the repreſenting to Your Majeſty the ardent deſire we had to ſee Your Majeſty entertain other ſentiments, and our diſpoſition to do any thing in our power to acquire again the honour of Your Majeſties good Correſpondence. Since that, upon the Propoſition made by the Mediators of a general Truce, for as much as according to our judgment*

we

we could not consent to it without hazarding the Safety of our State; yet, to evidence to Your Majesty how great a desire we had to give You all possible marks of our Respect, and to the end to procure to Your Subjects all the advantages which they could have received from a general Truce, we offered one by Sea to Your Majesty for the term of a year, or a longer time, if Your Majesty thought it convenient; judging, that in the condition things were then in, we could not give a greater proof of the ardent passion we had to smooth the way to a happy Reconciliation, then by putting all Your Majesties Subjects into a condition of tasting the sweetness of Peace, while ours should suffer all the incommodities of War. The Ministers of the King of Spain have represented from time to time the same things to Your Majesty, and have often repeated their instances to incline Your Majesty to Peace; But besides all these advances, and the steps we have made in publick, we have made use of other means which we judged more efficacious: And His Highness the Prince of Orange, as well of his own inclination, as at the request we have several times reiterated to him, hath used all imaginable ways of regaining the honour of Your Majesties friendship for us, and representing to You the advantage and glory Your Majesty might acquire, by re-establishing the Quiet of Christendom, and giving us a Peace which we had so often and so ardently desired. But albeit we had all reason to hope, that the instances of a

Prince,

Prince who hath the honour to be ſo nearly related to Your Majeſty, and whoſe perſonal merit is ſo well known, would at laſt prevail over thoſe who are ill-affected to us; and that beſides we could hardly believe, that after His Highneſſes intereſts and ours were become common and were no longer ſeparate in any thing, Your Majeſty would retain Your former ſentiments, and go about to involve in our ruine one of the moſt Illuſtrious Princes of Your bloud; we have nevertheleſs with great ſorrow ſeen that all theſe reaſons have been alike weak, and that Your Majeſty hath not been induced by any motive to abate any thing of Your firſt rigour. So that when we expected a favourable Anſwer to our Overtures, it hath been declared to us at Cologne, *that no Peace was to be hoped, unleſs there were accorded not onely to Your Majeſty and the Moſt Chriſtian King, but alſo to the Elector of* Cologne *and the Biſhop of* Munſter, *ſuch Conditions as never were demanded of a Free People, and which can ſo little be propoſed as Articles of Peace, that they can onely be the conſequences of an Abſolute Conqueſt, the ſubverſion of the Reformed Religion, of which Your Majeſty and the Kings Your moſt Illuſtrious Predeceſſors have been the ſtrongeſt Support and Defenders, and which carried with them at once the utter ruine not onely of us, but alſo of the* Low-Countries *belonging to the King of* Spain.

This hath obliged us on our ſide, after we had reſolved upon a neceſſary defence, to preſs our Friends to enter into a ſtricter Alliance with us; And it hath pleaſed God ſo to bleſs our endeavours,

and

and the means we have uſed in order thereunto, that the moſt Auguſt Houſe of Auſtria *hath declared in our favour, and the moſt Serene King of* Spain *in particular hath concluded with us a League Offenſive and Defenſive, in purſuance whereof he hath already declared War againſt the King of* France. *Things being thus,* SIRE, *Your Majeſty will eaſily believe that the conſequences muſt be greater, but before the evil be paſt remedy we thought fit to make one final eſſay, and to aſſure Your Majeſty that whatſoever change hath hapned in* Europe, *our deference and reſpect for Your Majeſty is ſtill the ſame; and that how conſiderable and how potent ſoever our Allies are, we are not the leſs diſpoſed to give Your Majeſty all the ſatisfaction which You can reaſonably pretend; And we have this happineſs, that our Allies are of the ſame mind with us herein; we preſume therefore to hope that Your Majeſty will not refuſe at our requeſt and their interceſſion, what we have not been hitherto able to obtain; And that You will not augment the deſolation which is already but too univerſal.*

But that we may omit nothing that may diſpoſe Your Majeſty thereunto, we beſeech You to reflect upon all that hath paſſed ſince the beginning of the War, and at the ſame time to conſider that it is from a particular one become general. When Your Majeſty engaged in it we were the onely Enemies; *At preſent a great part of* Europe *is no leſs intereſſed therein then we; And Your Majeſty cannot continue a War, which hath already been ſo ruinous, without declaring it againſt thoſe who are united with us, and without hazarding the Safety of all Chriſtendom, if*

the Arms of the King of France *ſhould be victorious through the ſuccours given by Your Majeſty to him. And Your Majeſty can no longer take it ill that we yield not what Your Majeſty might demand of us for* France, *ſince by an indiſpenſable neceſsity we can no longer do it but with the agreement of our Allies. So that as the General Treaty appears accompanied with many difficulties, and that we foreſee that it will be a means to continue this unhappy War, which we deſire to put an end to ſpeedily, eſpecially with Your Majeſty, we ſhall think our ſelves very happy if any of theſe conſiderations may make impreſſion upon Your Majeſties mind, and diſpoſe You to reſume thoſe ſentiments which we have heretofore with joy obſerved in Your Majeſty, and in which, upon the reconciliation we promiſe to our ſelves, we doubt not but Your Majeſty will continue for ever. In the mean time we pray God,*

SIRE,

To crown Your Majeſties Reign with felicity, and to bleſs Your Royal Perſon with health and long life.

At the *Hague* the 25th of *October* 1673.

Your MAJESTIES

Moſt humble Servants,

The States-General of the United Provinces of the Low-Countreys.

GASP. FAGEL.

By Command of the aboveſaid,

H. FAGEL.

HIS

His Majesties ANSWER

To the *Letter* sent from the

STATES GENERAL

OF THE

UNITED PROVINCES

Of the Low Countreys, by their Trumpeter.

High and Mighty Lords, Although your Letter of the 25th of *October*, considering the present conjuncture of affairs, the matter it contains, and the manner of sending it by a Trumpeter when your Deputies at *Cologne* were in frequent Conferences with Our Plenipotentiaries there, have more of the nature of a Manifest then a Letter, and that consequently you may not perhaps desire to have any Answer made to it; yet for the Vindication of Our Honour, as well as for the undeceiving that part of the World which may

be

be abuſed by it, We would not ſuffer it to remain without a diſtinct Reply from point to point as they lie in your Paper (which We ſend you by the ſame hand that brought Us yours;) and the rather becauſe it may ſo have fallen out, that by the great revolutions which have lately hapned in your affairs and the change of your Miniſters, even your ſelves may have taken for truth what evil-minded perſons have ſo maliciouſly ſuggeſted to you, thereby to ſeduce your own people as well as Ours.

There will need no great proofs to convince the World that many offenſive Medalls, Inſcriptions and Libels were theſe laſt years paſt diſperſed every where in your Provinces, to the derogation of Our Honour, and that of the whole *Engliſh* Nation, ſince the notoriety of them was ſo univerſal: but to this day neither We nor any body elſe knew you had diſowned any part of them, until your aforeſaid Letter told Us you had at the time they were complained of to your Ambaſſador here, cauſed the Stamps to be broken for fear new Impreſſions ſhould be ſecretly made by them; neither do you yet tell Us that ever you inflicted the leaſt Puniſhment upon the makers or diſperſers of them.

As to the affair of *Surinam*; Could you make the World or Our People believe what in this Paper you affirm, your ſelves would have outdone your Medalls, and would be more injurious then they, faſtning a Reproach upon Us

which,

which We have been as far from deſerving, as you, We hope, will be from being believed in the accuſation. You ſay, you agreed to whatſoever We demanded in favour of Our Subjects remaining at *Surinam*. Did We not continually preſs their Releaſe from the time of Our Surrendring that place into your hands till the beginning of this preſent War, and is there not yet the greater part of them remaining there? Are they there detained your Slaves at Our deſire? Did We ſend Our Ships thither onely for a colour, with intention to ſubject them to your Tyranny more entirely and with the greater decency? and not to deliver them from it? Was not the Officer We ſent thither, Major *Baniſter*, confined preſently upon his arrival, and not ſuffer'd to ſpeak with his Countrey-men, or acquaint them with the care We had of them? Did he not Proteſt againſt the Governor for having broken the Capitulation in Eighteen ſeveral points? And will you ſay all this was done according to what We deſired? Had you been ſo tender of the bloud of both Nations as in your Paper you pretend, you would not ſo long and with ſo much obſtinacy have perſiſted in oppreſſing thoſe Our Subjects whom you detain in that Colony. And it is manifeſt that if you could caſt all the blame hereof upon Vs, [illegible] you have a mind to do it. All We can ſay therefore to this your aſſertion is, That you have indeed granted Vs in words all We asked, but that We have never obtained any thing of you in deeds.

What followed, was the pretended Satisfaction you ſay you offered at all times to make Vs in relation to the Trade of Our Subjects in the *Eaſt-Indies*. It was ſolemnly promiſed by the Treaty of *Breda*, that things ſhould be adjuſted by Commiſsioners to be ſent hither by you when there ſhould be more leiſure for it. But you well know that Our Ambaſſador whom We ſent after the ſaid Treaty to reſide with you, could obtain nothing in that matter by all his inſtances that could in any wiſe ſatisfie Our *Eaſt-India* Company. Nor did the Sieur *Van Beuningen*, who ſeemed to have come hither expreſly upon that account, offer any more in all his Conferences with Our Commiſsioners upon that ſubject. It is true, the Ambaſſador *Boreel* produced here a full Power from you to treat and conclude an Offenſive and Defenſive League with Vs, but We could not accept the Propoſition, becauſe the conditions of it were not ſufficiently equitable, and that inſtead of giving Vs ſatisfaction in Our complaints, he would never ſo much as admit of their being mentioned. On the contrary, his whole diſcourſe tended to nothing elſe but to perſwade Vs that the States General offered Vs this League as a mark of their Friendſhip and for Our ſecurity alone, ſeeming indifferent whether it were accepted or not; and magnifying continually the greatneſs of your Forces by Land and Sea, as ſufficient to defend you againſt the formidable power of *France*; and

often

often threatning Vs, that you could make ſuch a League whenſoever you pleaſed with *France*, and even againſt Vs, if We accepted not what his Maſters offered Vs. The ſum of theſe two points is, That the Sieur *Van Beuningen* was pleaſed to diſcourſe concerning the Satisfaction demanded by Vs in point of Trade in the *Eaſt-Indies*, but departed without offering any thing; and the Sieur *Boreel* offered Us a League Offenſive and Defenſive, without giving Vs Satisfaction for the paſt Injuries, or ſecurity againſt future; And all this to the end the Injuries We had complained of that till then were peculiarly your acts, might by a ſolemn Treaty be declar'd Our own.

The next matter of offence given Us was (as you well obſerve in your Letter) the affront committed againſt Our Flagg in the moneth of *Auguſt* 1671. Complaint was made thereof to your Ambaſſador reſiding here, and he aſſured Us he would procure Us a fair ſatisfaction thereupon: but three or four moneths time paſſing without the leaſt notice being taken thereof by you, We held Our Self obliged to ſend Our Extraordinary Ambaſſador to demand Satisfaction of you in more earneſt terms then We had done before; To which not receiving any ſatisfactory Anſwer, he had order to return. Soon after he was followed by an Extraordinary Ambaſſador from you, who affirmed that he had no Powers to make reparation for this affront, or any other of theſe things

We

We had ſo often complained of, but to agree upon terms of Regulation in the buſineſs of the Flagg for the future; yet ſaying withall, that of himſelf and without conſulting you again he could not put any thing in writing concerning it. The arrival of the ſaid Ambaſſador Extraordinary was about the time We were ready to make open Declaration of War againſt your State; which We could no longer delay, becauſe the Spring was coming on, and the ſaid Ambaſſador perſiſted that his Inſtructions permitted him not to do any thing upon Our Demands; neither was he able to produce any thing to juſtifie his delay, but the offering Us to write to his Maſters for larger Powers and Inſtructions.

The War following upon this, In the heat of it Three Deputies arrived here from you without any Paſsports from Us, or giving Us notice of their coming according to the Cuſtoms and Uſages of War. Whereupon We might well have confined them (as you ſay We did) but We contented Our Self with warning them to abſtain from coming to lodge in this Our City, appointing them inſtead thereof Lodgings in Our Palace of *Hampton Court*, with all other conveniences ſuitable to their Character, and diſſembling what We knew paſſed between them and perſons they practiſed upon to cauſe tumults and diſorders in Our City, or to diſturb the progreſs of the War. Notwithſtanding which, We forbore not to ſend to them ſome

of

of the Principal perſons of Our Council to conferre with them and hear their Propoſals. To whom they made this onely Anſwer, and perſiſted therein to the time of their departure, that they had no Authority or Inſtructions to make any Propoſitions, but were content to hearken to thoſe that ſhould be made to them, and to tranſmit them to their Maſters; hoping that while they amuſed Us with this appearance, the Deputies you had ſent at the ſame time to the Moſt Chriſtian King might have concluded a ſeparate Treaty with him.

And can you flatter your ſelves with the opinion that the World ſhould look upon this proceeding as a convincing proof of your ardent deſires for Peace? Did ever Prince or State ſend an Ambaſſador with deſign to obtain that which the Ambaſſador was not empowered either to conclude or ſign, eſpecially to a Prince with whom they had War? It is much more rational to believe what you did was to gain time, whilſt you endeavoured to put in execution thoſe threats in relation to *France* that the Sieur *Boreel* had before given Us.

The Miniſter of *Brandenburgh* never declared that he came hither to make Us any overtures of Peace, or that he had any other Commiſſion then to incline Us at the recommendation of His Maſter to hearken to thoſe that ſhould be made Us. He came hither at the time that the Ambaſſador Extraordinary of His moſt Serene Majeſty the King of *Sweden*

arrived, in order to the offering Us the Mediation of their Maſter, which We readily embraced, as likewiſe a Propoſition made by them to Us for a Suſpenſion of Arms. But a little after when they propoſed the ſame thing to you, you thought fit abſolutely to reject the Suſpenſion; and were ſo long bargaining upon the choice of a place for treating the Peace, that many moneths paſſed without producing any other effect then your gaining your point in naming the City of *Cologne* for the Congreſs: Which being agreed to, and Our Fleet ready to put to Sea, you ſent Us word you would then accept a Ceſſation of Arms by Sea. To which We found Our Self obliged to make anſwer, That a Peace might be made in much leſs time then the terms of a Partial Suſpenſion be agreed upon; although it appeared to Us a meer artifice, invented onely to charm the Common Peoples ears, and make Us conſume unprofitably all Our preparations for equipping Our Fleet. In a word, when Our Merchants might really have received benefit by a Suſpenſion, you abſolutely refuſed it, and would then onely yield to it when you ſaw your Provinces like to ſuffer by the progreſs of the War.

The Miniſters of *Spain* never offered Us any Conditions, nor performed any other office, then in general terms to incline Us to the thoughts of Peace, which We ever accepted kindly from them.

Neither

Neither did Our Nephew the Prince of *Orange* ever make Us any Overtures for Peace: We muſt needs avow, That the manner of your Comportment towards him till the year laſt paſt, was no very good Argument to perſwade Us, that your intentions of living in a good Correſpondence with Us, were real and ſincere: And although We were unwilling to ſhew Our reſentment of his uſage publiquely, leſt We ſhould give occaſion to his Enemies to do him more harm; yet ſo ſoon as the good will of the People prevailing againſt the *Louveſtein* Party, had Conferred upon him that Power and Authority in the Government which his Anceſtors had ſo well merited, We applied Our ſelf with more Zeal and Efficacy to make the Peace; being further incited thereunto by the unexpected Succeſs of the Arms by Land of the moſt Chriſtian King. We forthwith ſent Ambaſſadors Extraordinary to him, to be preſent at the Treaty; which the *Louveſtein* Party would have managed to the Excluding of Us, if the Vertue and Generoſity of that Prince would have permitted him to admit it: But ſo ſoon as Our Ambaſſadors were ſeen upon the place, the Deputies withdrew themſelves, and never after appeared; following that fundamental maxim you had laid from the beginning of this War, to divide Us by any kind of Artifices, thereof to make your own advantage.

As to your inſinuation of Our intention to ruine

ruine Our Nephew the Prince of *Orange*, you know your ſelves ſufficiently the injuſtice of that reproach. And whilſt at *Cologne* you openly complain to the Mediators that We are too zealous in advancing His Intereſts, you would have Our Subjects believe We are guilty of ill nature towards him. And the better to improve this abuſe you adde, without giving or having any the leaſt ground for it, that Our demands at *Cologne* tend to the ſubverſion of the Proteſtant Religion, and the ruine of Our Nephews family. We cannot conclude Our remarks upon this Letter or Manifeſt framed by you with deſign to abuſe your people and Ours, and involved in terms of reſpect for Our Perſon, and fair words about a Peace, without adding what ought to be convincing to the moſt obſtinate amongſt you; At the ſame time you would perſwade Us to break Our Word and Faith given to Our Allies, Not to Treat ſeparately, you eſtabliſh it for a Fundamental point, that you cannot break the word you have given yours, without wronging your honour; as if your honour ought always to be dear to you, but Ours of little or no value with Us.

In the mean time, you make the proceedings of your Deputies at *Cologne* to paſs for the faireſt and moſt ingenuous that may be, reproaching that of Our Plenipotentiaries as rude and inſincere; ſaying, That notwithſtanding all your endeavours, We would never

ver yet abate of Our firſt rigour. Herein We appeal to the Mediators themſelves, who will not be wanting to do Us juſtice in letting the World know, that Our ſaid Plenipotentiaries have retrenched at leaſt one half of their firſt demands, whilſt yours have continually excuſed themſelves from giving an anſwer upon any one of them, except that of the Flagg, with which they ſeem inclined to gratifie Us for the future, but in terms very equivocal, and which ſhall not take notice of any right We ever had to it for the time paſt: And this is the onely thing you have ſhewn the leaſt diſpoſition to yield to Us during the whole courſe of this Negotiation: And having made no further advance in the overtures of Peace which you ſay you made Us by Our Nephew the Prince of *Orange*, the Miniſters of *Spain* and *Brandenburgh*, and by thoſe of the Mediators themſelves, you do not ſo much as mention one word of it in your ſaid Letter; handling the matter of the Peace in general terms, to acquire to your ſelves the reputation of it, and not making Us one Propoſition but that of dividing Us from Our Allies; an Action which you eſteem too low for a Common-wealth, but ſuitable enough to a King.

If you have a deſire to promote the Peace in good Earneſt, inſtead of ſpecious expreſſions, ſend Powers without further de-

lay to your Deputies at *Cologne*, to draw up Juſt and Equal Articles with Ours; and the World ſhall ſee how ready We ſhall be to Comply with them, and to reſume thoſe ſentiments of Friendſhip and Eſteem which the Kings Our Predeceſſors have always had for your State: And to manifeſt to you that We are truly

From White-hall *the* 7th *of* November, 1673.

Your good friend,

CHARLES R.

FINIS.